

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Global electric car sales increase significantly over three years

Academics at the Centre for Solar Energy and Hydrogen Research Baden-Württemberg (ZSW) have said that global sales of electric cars have doubled every year for the past three years, from almost 100,000 on the roads in 2012 to around 405,000 this year.

The research suggests that the demand is highest in the US, Japan and China, with European countries like France and Norway catching up. Countries with government incentives in place had the most electric vehicles on the roads.

Professor Werner Tillmetz

of ZSW said that the fact that battery production is concentrated in Asian countries is holding back progress in European countries such as Germany: "Most car batteries come from Japan and South Korea. If Germany wants to secure batteries' big share of the value-added, there will have to be a coordinated strategic effort to establish a German production."

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FINANCE

£11m fund for green vehicle projects

The Technology Strategy Board has awarded five carbon reduction projects a share of an £11 million fund. It is hoped that the award will advance green technologies for cars and commercial vehicles.

The projects focus on areas such as waste heat recovery

systems for commercial vehicles. Iain Gray, chief executive of the Technology Strategy Board, said: "We want to ensure that the UK is a global leader in low carbon transport technology, by bringing businesses together to work on ground-breaking projects to reduce emissions."

FREIGHT

European Parliament votes for new lorry design

Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have voted through a motion to make lorries safer and run more efficiently, with 570 MEPs voting to pass the bill and 88 against. This followed a March vote from the EP Transport Committee in favour of the new rules.

Under the new rules, lorries will be required to have larger windows and a more rounded 'nose' shaped front rather than the current 'brick' design. It is claimed that these changes will reduce the 'blind spot' in drivers' vision, making the roads safer for cyclists, and that they will make vehicles more fuel-efficient.

The rule must be backed by all 28 EU member



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states before it passes into law. If it is passed, it will become compulsory for lorry manufacturers to implement the design in seven years.

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LowCVP's Andy Eastlake 2014: the year to invest

I write this as we wrap up our very successful event with Sustainability Hub on 'Green and Growth, we can have both' with a keynote from Danny Alexander and a networking address from Iain Wright. The event highlighted the broad support given to our automotive industry and how important this has been in creating the environment for stability through the most challenging economic period, as an example to other sectors.

But a real message that came through is how we must use the sound footing we now have, to push forward the messages and investment needed to create the 'environmental economy'. The latest report from the IPCC again shows how vital it is that we redouble our efforts to reduce carbon emissions as we emerge from the recession.

For the LowCVP this means greater activity in our communications programme, so we are putting together the final details for our Annual Conference, to be held on 15 July in Central London. We have also just announced our collaboration with Cenex to hold the LowCVP Low Carbon Champions Awards at the inaugural LCV dinner in September. For us these two events provide the basis to communicate the excellent progress made within our industry by individuals and companies across every area, to celebrate those successes and share the latest knowledge.

To support our conference and to provide evidence about how the focus on low carbon policies can benefit companies and the UK commercially, as well as environmentally, the LowCVP has launched a call for evidence to inform the study on UK automotive sector investment, analysing the impacts of policies on investment decisions. The outcome of the study will be presented as the centrepiece of the Annual Conference.

The study will, we hope, help to inform policy development in the future and encourage the continued (and increased?) support to low carbon vehicles and fuels which we all need.

Consultancy E4tech and the Automotive Industry Research Centre, Cardiff Business School (CAIR) have been selected to undertake this research project following a competitive tender process. The study is supported by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Greener Journeys. The project advisory panel also includes representatives of the SMMT, European Climate Foundation, Cambridge Judge Business School, LowCVP and two independent consultants with wide-ranging experience in the sector.

The call takes the form of an on-line questionnaire, which takes no more than 15 minutes to complete.

With this report and through our work programme and communications this year, we really do believe that we can show how 2014 is the year for everyone to invest in low carbon vehicles and fuels.

[FURTHER INFORMATION](#)

www.lowcvp.org.uk/events or @theLowCVP on Twitter